

Massachusetts Special Legislative Commission on Postpartum Depression (PPD)
Wednesday, October 14th 2015, 5:30-7:30 PM
House Members' Lounge, State House, Boston

Minutes

Commissioners present: Representative Ellen Story (Chair); Senator Joan Lovely (Chair); Khadeejah Ahmed (on behalf of Rep. James O'Day); Dr. Lee Cohen; Gail DeRiggi (on behalf of Commissioner Thomas Weber); Elizabeth Fluet; Liz Friedman; Dr. Gordon Harper; Dr. Julie Johnston; Dr. Monica Le; Dr. Michael Yogman.

Commissioners absent: Kristen Alexander ; Karen Crowley; Karin Downs; Rep. Kimberly Ferguson; Sen. Jennifer Flanagan; Mary Elizabeth Gamache Dr. Janice Goodman; Peggy Kaufman; Kerry LaBounty; Dr. Claire Levesque; Sen. Thomas McGee; Dr. Tiffany Moore Simas; Rep. Denise Provost; Sen. Richard Ross Rep. Tom Sannicandro; Dr. Alison Schonwald; Nancy Schwartz ; Dr. Jayne Singer; Dr. Joshua Sparrow; Eileen Terlaga; Lisa Waxman.

Commission staff present: Yaminette Diaz-Linhart, Aide to Rep. Story, Amanda Gordon, Intern to Rep. Story and Anna Roy, Aide to Sen. Lovely.

Members of the public and other state employees were also present.

1. Welcome; approval of minutes

Rep. Ellen Story welcomed Commission members and guests. All of those in attendance introduced themselves. The Commission approved the minutes from the April 15th, 2014 meeting.

2. Review of PPD Commission

Rep. Story gave an overview of the Commission, its purpose and its activities. The Commission has met a total of 13 times since the Commission was established by law in 2010. Successful programs and collaborations that have emerged from the Commission have included the following:

- Collaborating with Department of Public Health to promulgate postpartum depression screening reporting requirements
- Laying the ground work for MCPAP for Moms, an expansion of the MCPAP program, with a focus on maternal mental health
- Funding PPD Community Health Center pilot programs across the State to help establish lessons learned for screening and referral systems in women's health and pediatric settings
- Advocating for postpartum depression screening coverage in pediatric settings
- Postpartum Depression Awareness Day at the State House

3. Discussion on next steps for PPD Commission

PPD Commissioners and others present discussed areas of opportunities for the PPD Commission. These included the following:

- Developing a public awareness campaign and increasing efforts to reduce stigma on maternal mental health issues
- Conducting outreach to special populations that have not yet been part of ongoing work, including: teen mothers, recovering mothers and perinatal substance abuse population, underrepresented minorities that target health disparities, such as the Latino population.

- Evaluating the impact of our PPD initiatives, both on the programmatic level as well as the policy level. Ideas included: studying the cost savings of our initiatives, evaluating the PPD pilot programs and studying child outcomes.
- Developing a centralized state-wide resource guide that is specific to perinatal and postpartum mental health.
- Other potential ideas included: working in a more targeted way with Department of Children and Families for mothers who are involved in DCF and are experiencing PPD, hosting a conference that targets PPD and establishing a day treatment hospital that specializes in PPD.
- Working to include fathers and study paternal PPD.

5. Reports and discussion of PPD initiatives

Department of Public Health (DPH) Annual Report: Beth Buxton reported on the DPH annual report of PPD activities. Beth also gave an overview of the current use of billing codes being used by providers and agencies to report PPD screening.

Postpartum Progress Initiatives: Susan Petcher and Candice Brothers, MA representatives from Postpartum Progress reported on several initiatives. These included their annual Climb Out of the Darkness event to reduce stigma and raise awareness on maternal mental health. Information on their initiatives can be found online at the Postpartum Progress website. Postpartum Progress will also be helping to host the 2016 PPD Awareness Day.

Federal PPD Bill and National Coalition for Maternal Mental Health: Jamie Belsito reported on her advocacy efforts around the federal bill, *Bringing Postpartum Depression Out of the Shadows Act*, introduced by Congresswoman Katherine Clark (D-Mass) and Congressman Ryan Costello (R-PA). She also shared about a new initiative, the National Coalition for Maternal Mental Health that brings together organizations across the country that work on promoting maternal mental health.

Medicaid Screening Coverage Update: Dr. Monica Le reported that Mass Health released a Provider Bulletin outlining voluntary reporting of PPD screening for maternal and pediatric care providers. MassHealth reimbursement for perinatal depression screening is projected to begin in 2016.

6. Other announcements

Senator Lovely announced that she is a co-sponsor of an amendment to the Senate Supplemental Budget bill (S.2025) that would require the Massachusetts Department of Public Health make a request for approval from the United States Department of Agriculture to include diapers for children and infants under the WIC program. The amendment was filed by Senator Bruce Tarr and was passed by the Senate on a roll call vote of 35-0.

Anna Roy announced that Senator Lovely's office is working on holding a screening of a PPD documentary for legislators in early 2016 to highlight PPD as a legislative issue.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.